

INTERAGENCY PREPAREDNESS LEVELS (created 2/24/2005)

Preparedness levels are established by Interagency Coordinating Groups based on current and forecast burning conditions, fire activity, resource availability. Situations and activities described within the preparedness levels consider Wildland and prescribed fire.

DRC Area Preparedness Levels are determined through the evaluation of all the descriptive criteria listed for each Level and making a consolidated decision for the area of which Preparedness Level's criteria best describes the DRC areas Fuels, Fire Activity and Resource current and predicted situation.

A representative sample of DRC area fuels and weighted station values were used to create six "SIGS" which will identify the areas Preparedness Levels. Thresholds of these weighted values were developed using agency criteria (90% & 97%), analyzing fire occurrence and through input from local fire managers. The percentile threshold values for each preparedness level is as follows:

PL 1	0 - 45%
PL 2	46 - 67%
PL 3	68 - 89%
PL4	90 - 96%
PL 5	97% +

**For ERC the "G" fuel model was used from the Devil Mt (34), Chapin (33) and Mesa Mt (33) RAWS.
For BI, the "F" fuel model was used from the Morfield (34), Chapin (33) and Mesa Mt (33) RAWS.**

Preparedness Level Threshold Criteria: Description

The following Preparedness Level Threshold Criteria consist of fuel indices, weather, resource availability, commitment, and fire activity. These criteria have been determined to be the most representative indices and conditions indicating potential fire within the Durango Interagency Dispatch Zone. There are a total of eight criteria that when analyzed, will prompt fire managers to develop an overall picture of current fire potential and produce a Preparedness Level. Individual criteria should not to be analyzed separately as Preparedness Levels are determined through analysis of the entire fire environment. The criteria are as follows:

Adjective Rating: (Current weather situation indicator) A fuel index that rates fire danger as Low, Moderate, High, Very High or Extreme. It is based upon the staffing level and the ignition component and is generally used for public information purposes.

Staffing Level: (Current required staffing for the predicted weather situation) An index that represents a readiness level and is expressed from 1 (low) to 5 (high). Staffing levels are based on Energy Release Component or Burning Index.

Release Component (ERC): (A seasonal fuels indicator) A fuel index that is related to the available energy (BTU) per unit area (Sq. ft.) within the flaming front at the head of a fire. It uses the both live and dead fuel moisture content of the fuels present and represents the potential "heat release" of a fire and is determined to be the *most valuable evaluation tool of drought and other long-term processes*.

For the Durango Zone criteria, ERC thresholds will be determined analyzing Fuel Model G from the Devil Mountain (34%), Chapin (33%) and Mesa Mountain (33%) Remote Automated Weather Stations (RAWS).

Burning Index (BI): (Provides a daily indicator of fire/fuels conditions) Represents the difficulty of control of a fire and is derived from a combination of Spread Component and Energy Release Component. It is related to flame length over a fire danger rating area.

For the Durango Zone criteria, BI thresholds will be determined analyzing Fuel Model F from the Morefield (34%), Chapin (33%) and Mesa Mountain (33%) RAWS.

Fire Weather: Represents the probability of ignition and fire behavior and is an influence on fuel conditions.

Fire Activity: Represents the amount of fires occurring and the effects and impacts on suppression capabilities for initial attack and large fires. IMT's activated and fire size class are indicators of fire activity.

Resource Commitment: The current resources committed situation in the DRC area and outside (RMA & National)

Resource Availability: The current resources available situation in the DRC area and outside (RMA & National)

DURANGO COORDINATING GROUP PREPAREDNESS LEVEL DESCRIPTIONS

PREPAREDNESS LEVEL 1:

PREP LEVEL	DESCRIPTION	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS
I	<p><u>DRC Area:</u></p> <p>NFDRS Adjective rating: Majority of the DRC Areas weather stations indicate LOW to MODERATE</p> <p>Staffing Levels: Majority of the DRC Areas weather stations indicate 0-2</p> <p>ERC (DRC SIG "G"): 0 – 45</p> <p>BI (DRC SIG "F"): 0 – 23</p> <p>WEATHER: No adverse Fire Weather conditions exist as related to: Lightning Activity Level (LAL); Haines Index; and Red Flag Weather Warnings and Watches.</p> <p>Fire Activity Levels: Local: Little or no activity occurring National: Little or no activity occurring</p> <p>Resource Committed: Little or no commitment of DRC area resources locally or nationally.</p> <p>Resource Available: Local: adequate for current & predicted conditions National: adequate for current & predicted conditions</p> <p>Prescribed Fire: Conditions exist for routine RX operations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire Season Preparation Review/Update all annual agreements, plans, guides, pocket cards and necessary operational paperwork for the upcoming Fire Season. • Update programs/software and prepare for fire season. (WIMS, ROSS, IQCS, Firestat, SACS, Wildcad) • Communications Systems operational (Radio, Email, phone system, Voiceprint, cell phones, pagers). • Fire Personnel Preparation training, fitness, equipment prep & utilization. • Prepare work plans, safety plans, project work, RX prep. • WIMS/NFDRS activated/calibrated/monitored. Annual Weather Station maintenance completed.

PREPAREDNESS LEVEL 2:

PREP LEVEL	DESCRIPTION	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS
2	<p><u>DRC Area:</u></p> <p>NFDRS Adjective rating: Majority of the DRC Areas weather stations indicate MODERATE to HIGH</p> <p>Staffing Levels: Majority of the DRC Areas weather stations indicate 2-3</p> <p>ERC (DRC SIG "G"): 46 – 55</p> <p>BI (DRC SIG "F"): 24 – 32</p> <p>WEATHER: No adverse Fire Weather conditions exist as related to: Lightning Activity Level (LAL); Haines Index; and Red Flag Weather Warnings and Watches.</p> <p>Fire Activity Levels: Local: A – B size class fires occurring. Potential exists for escapes to larger fires National: minimal fire activity</p> <p>Resource Committed: DRC area resources sufficient. Minimal commitment of DRC area resources locally or nationally.</p> <p>Resource Available: Local: adequate for current & predicted conditions National: adequate for current & predicted conditions</p> <p>Prescribed Fire: Conditions and resources adequate for routine RX operations.</p>	<p><u>All actions at PL 1 are addressed and implemented.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate fire occurrence and fire behavior activity. • Begin taking Live fuel moisture readings and submit to DRC for posting. • Evaluate availability of DRC area resources for "Out-of-Area" response. • Evaluate support needs in dispatch and IMT3 organizations. • DRCG/DRC area Fire Management have Bi-Monthly Conference Calls. (or as needed) May determine a need for more frequent communications. • Aerial Detection Flights, as needed. • Alert Interagency Public Affairs of need for media releases concerning fire activity or prevention messages. • Prescribed fire prescriptions reviewed daily.

PREPAREDNESS LEVEL 3:

PREP LEVEL	DESCRIPTION	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS
3	<p><u>DRC Area:</u></p> <p>NFDRS Adjective rating: Majority of the DRC Areas weather stations indicate HIGH to VERY HIGH</p> <p>Staffing Levels: Majority of the DRC Areas weather stations indicate 3</p> <p>ERC (DRC SIG "G"): 56 - 74</p> <p>BI (DRC SIG "F"): 33 - 80</p> <p>WEATHER: Adverse Fire Weather conditions exist as related to: Lightning Activity Level (LAL); Haines Index; and Red Flag Weather Warnings and Watches. =</p> <p>Fire Activity Levels: Local: Potential for "C" size class fires or larger fires exists. Lightning activity may produce multiple start fire days. Incidents occurring require a major commitment of DRC area resources. National: RMA and National PL at 3+</p> <p>Resource Committed: Incidents occurring require a major commitment of DRC area resources. Majority of the DRC area resources are committed internally and externally.</p> <p>The potential exists for ordering additional resources through dispatch channels.</p> <p>Resource Available: Local: Minimal to inadequate for current & predicted conditions National: adequate number of resources available</p> <p>Prescribed Fire: RX conditions minimal (excluding high elevation areas) and additional resources required for RX operations.</p>	<p><u>All actions at PL 1 - 2 are addressed and implemented.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DRCG/DRC area fire management activate weekly conference calls (or as needed) • Prepare for activation of DRC Expanded Dispatch, as needed. • Alert IMT3 organizations of current situation and possible on-call response timeframes. • DRC Fire Restriction Graphs updated/posted on DRC Web Site weekly • Evaluate DRC Area Fire Restriction and Closure Criteria Review. • Prepare Severity requests, as needed • Limit DRC resource availability allowed for external DRC area assignments. • Pre-positioning of suppression resources, as needed. • Aerial detection flights daily if lightning activity. • Obtain Weather and fire severity outlooks from NWS and RMACC Predictive Services Website. • New prescribed burning and Fire Use operations require interagency coordination. Prescribed fires and fire use fires progress evaluated daily.

PREPAREDNESS LEVEL 4:

PREP LEVEL	DESCRIPTION	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS
4	<p><u>DRC Area:</u></p> <p>NFDRS Adjective rating: Majority of the DRC Areas weather stations indicate VERY HIGH to EXTREME</p> <p>Staffing Levels: Majority of the DRC Areas weather stations indicate 4 or 5</p> <p>ERC (DRC SIG "G"): 75 - 87</p> <p>BI (DRC SIG "F"): 81 - 124</p> <p>WEATHER: Increased adverse Fire Weather conditions as related to: Lightning Activity Level (LAL); Haines Index; and Red Flag Weather Warnings and Watches. 7 day weather predictions do not call for any immediate relief.</p> <p>Fire Activity Levels: Local: One or more Type I, II, or III incidents occurring within the DRC area. Lightning activity may produce multiple start fire days. National: RMA and National PL at 3+</p> <p>Resource Committed: Incidents occurring require a major commitment of DRC area and external resources. Ordering additional resources through dispatch channels. Heavy commitment of resources locally and nationally.</p> <p>Resource Available: Local: minimal to no additional resources available for current & predicted conditions Order external resources for current & predicted conditions National: Competition for resources exists.</p> <p>Prescribed Fire: RX conditions minimal (excluding high elevation areas) and additional resources required for RX operations.</p>	<p><u>All actions at PL 1 - 3 are addressed and implemented.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DRCG activate daily conference calls (or as needed by agreement) • DRC MAC Group activated, as needed. DRC MAC establishes communications and coordination with RMCG MAC Group, and County Sheriff's. • SJPL fire management conference calls held weekly (or as needed by agreement). • IMT3 organizations on 4 hour call. • DRC Expanded Dispatch organization implemented • Implement Fire Restrictions per Guidelines. Assemble Interagency Public Information Team. • Evaluate discontinuing the release of DRC resource availability allowed for external DRC area assignments. • Evaluate availability of resources. • Request "Severity Funding". • May order and pre-position preparedness resources. • Consider suspending New prescribed burning. Fire use operations require interagency coordination. Prescribed fires and fire use fires progress evaluated daily.

PREPAREDNESS LEVEL 5:

PREP LEVEL	DESCRIPTION	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS
5	<p><u>DRC Area:</u></p> <p>NFDRS Adjective rating: All DRC Areas weather stations indicate VERY HIGH to EXTREME</p> <p>Staffing Levels: All DRC Areas weather stations indicate 5</p> <p>ERC (DRC SIG "G"): 88 +</p> <p>BI (DRC SIG "F"): 125 +</p> <p>WEATHER: Significant adverse Fire Weather conditions exist as related to: Lightning Activity Level (LAL); Haines Index; and Red Flag Weather Warnings and Watches. 7 - 14 day weather predictions do not call for any immediate relief.</p> <p>Fire Activity Levels: Local: Multiple Type I, II, or III incidents occurring within the DRC area. Lightning activity producing multiple start fire days. National: RMA and National PL at 4+</p> <p>Resource Committed: All DRC resources committed to incidents or preparedness activities. Ordering additional resources through dispatch channels. Heavy commitment of resources nationally.</p> <p>Resource Available: Local: DRC resources inadequate for current & predicted conditions. Order external resources. National: Competition for resources exists. Resource requests take 24+ hours to fill.</p> <p>Prescribed Fire: RX conditions suspended (excluding high elevation areas).</p>	<p><u>All actions at PL 1-4 are addressed and implemented.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All available resources are pre-positioned and ready for response. • IMT3 organizations on 2 hour call. • Discontinue release of all resources for out of area assignments. • DRCG evaluate situation and implement any needed action items to address current and predicted situation. • Consider opening a Mob/Demob facility. (Or use an existing fire ICP.) • Order FAST "Fire and Aviation Safety Teams" as needed. • Suspend New prescribed burning. Fire use operations require interagency coordination. Fire use fires progress evaluated daily.